

# Bedtime Without **ARTHUR**



Jessica Meserve

*Bella has a bear  
named Arthur.*

Like other bears,  
he's soft and cuddly. Unlike  
other bears, Arthur knows  
karate and works tirelessly  
all night to protect Bella from  
monsters, dragons, slugs, and  
other things that lurk in the  
shadows. One night, Arthur  
goes missing. Her mother,  
her father, and her little  
brother search high and low,  
but he is nowhere  
to be found.

*Will Bella ever find him again?  
Or can she find a way to be  
brave all on her own?*











To Bella – Sweet dreams.



*Also by Jessica Meserve:*

SMALL SISTER

CAN ANYBODY HEAR ME?

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# Bedtime Without **ARTHUR**



*Jessica Meserve*

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Bella has a bear.  
A very special bear called Arthur.  
He is as brave as a knight.  
He is as **strong** as ten elephants.  
And he does karate.











When Bella sleeps,

Arthur  
is  
BUSY.

He guards the bed and keeps  
away monsters that come

*sneaking from the shadows.*



Safe in her bed,  
Bella dreams  
of her favorite things,  
like rainbows  
and rainforests.





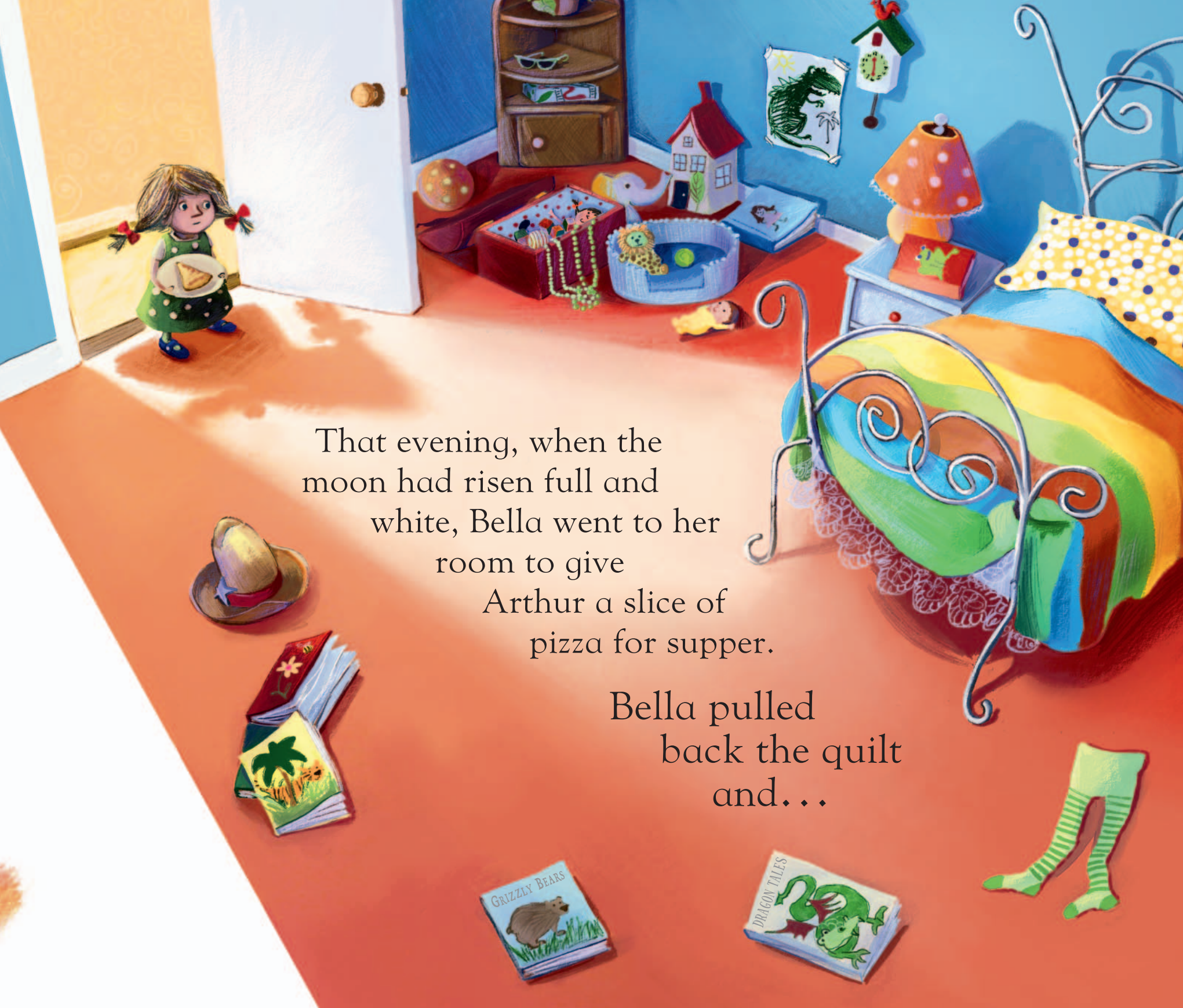
One morning, Arthur was worn out from so much karate.



Bella made him his favorite breakfast of toast and honey, and then tucked him up snug in bed.







That evening, when the  
moon had risen full and  
white, Bella went to her  
room to give  
Arthur a slice of  
pizza for supper.

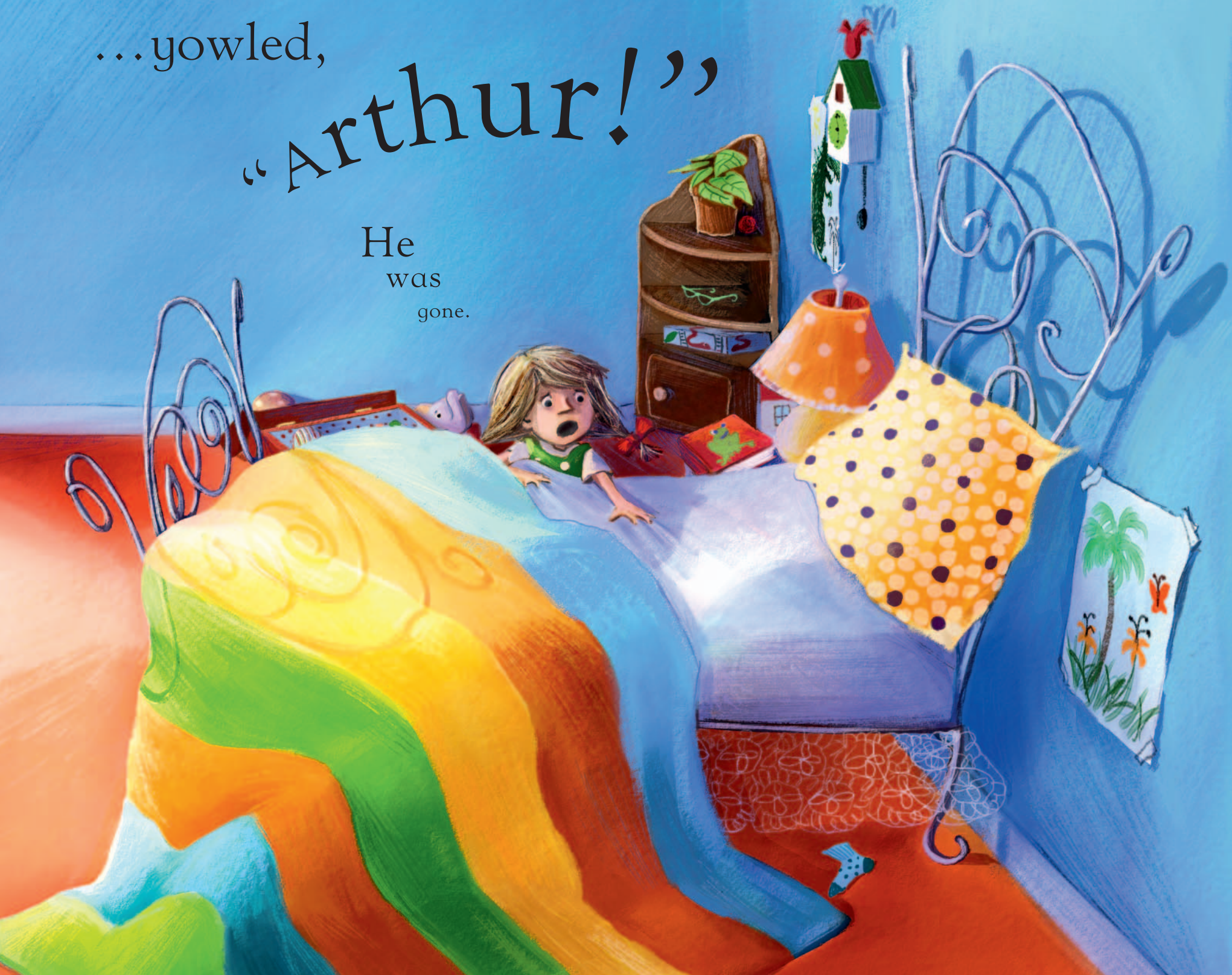
Bella pulled  
back the quilt  
and...



...yowled,

“Arthur!”

He  
was  
gone.





Bella searched

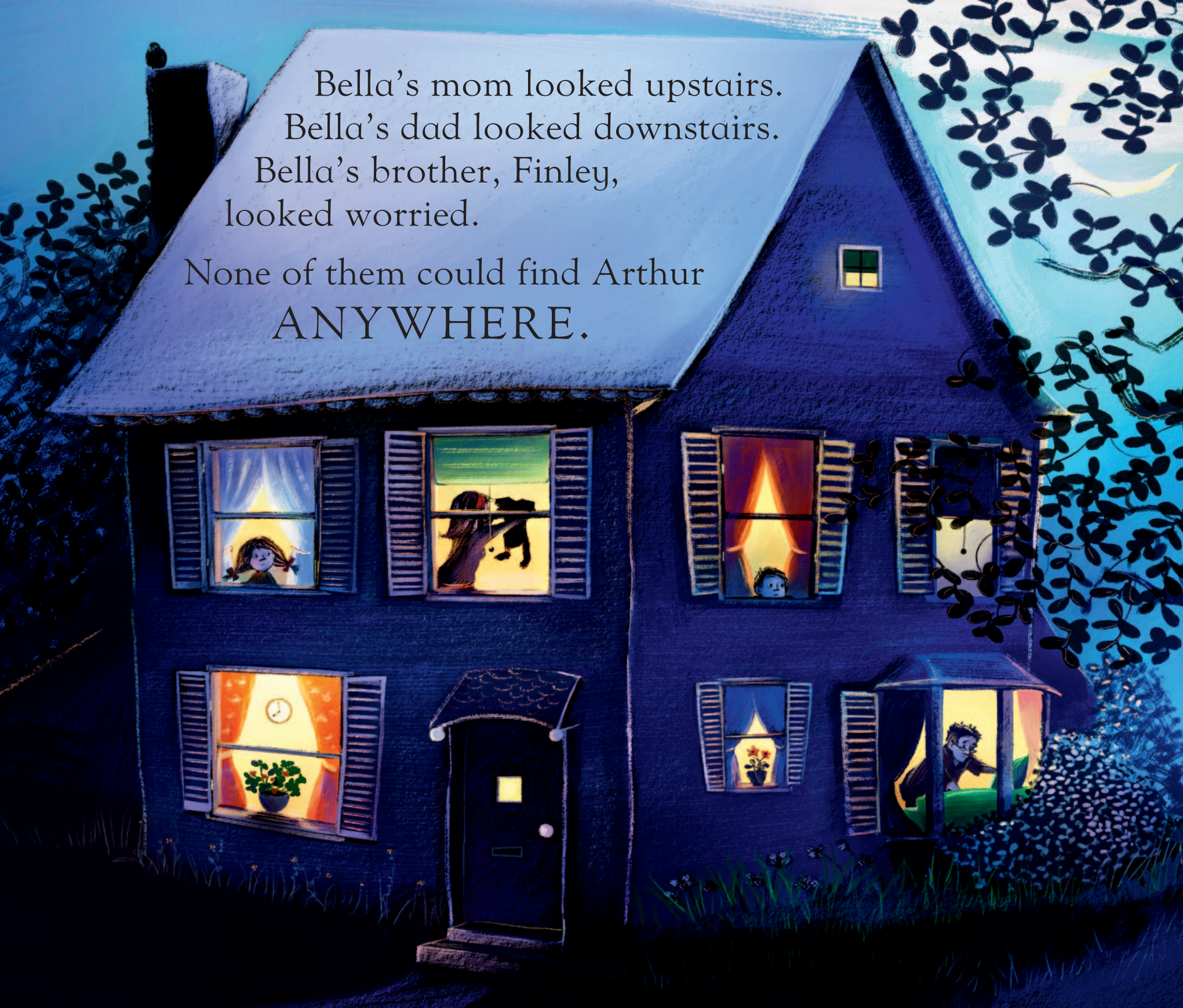
and searched.



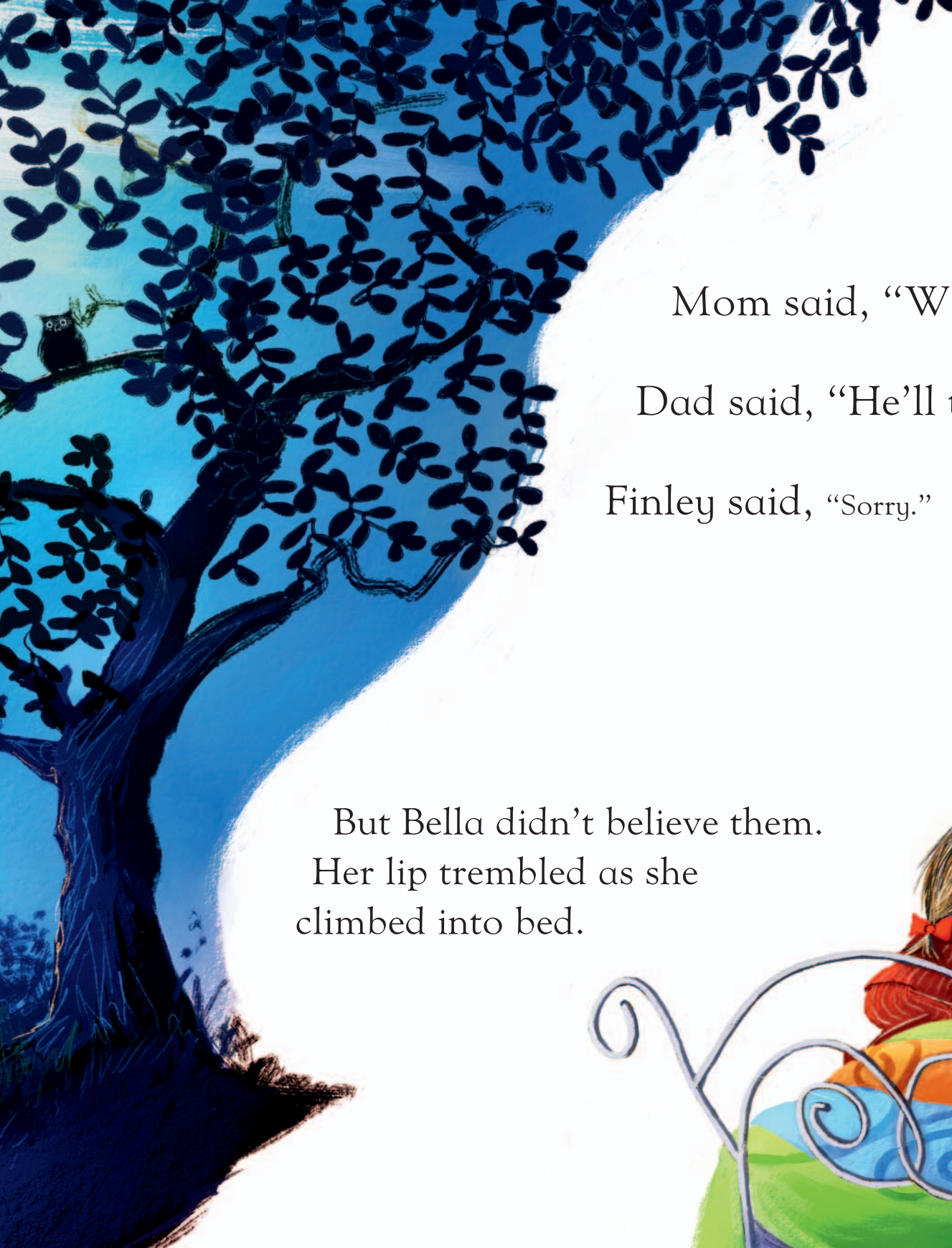


Bella's mom looked upstairs.  
Bella's dad looked downstairs.  
Bella's brother, Finley,  
looked worried.

None of them could find Arthur  
**ANYWHERE.**







Mom said, "We'll find him tomorrow."


Dad said, "He'll turn up."

Finley said, "Sorry."

But Bella didn't believe them.  
Her lip trembled as she  
climbed into bed.





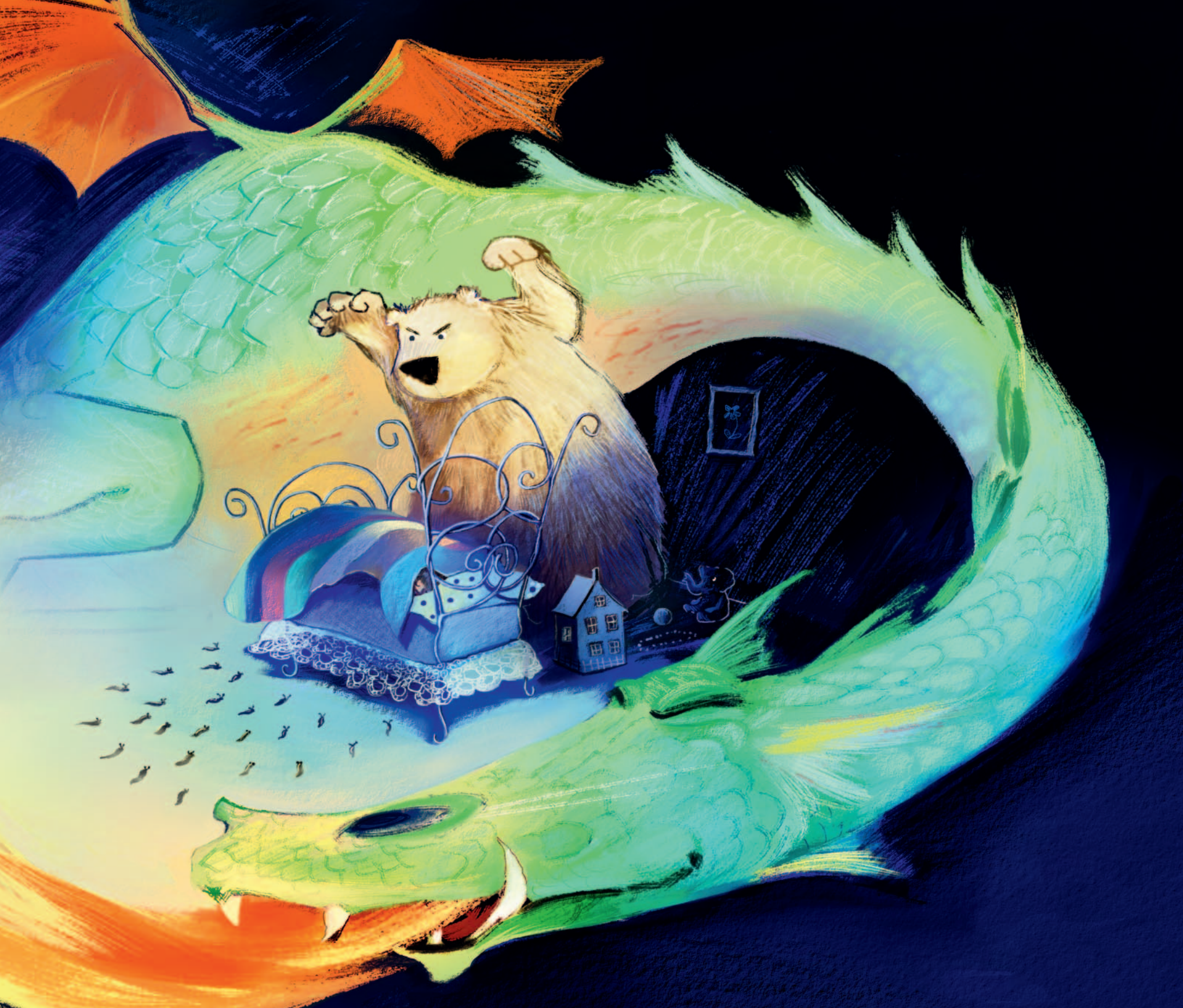


Bella couldn't sleep.  
She was sure there were  
**MONSTERS**  
watching and waiting.

Bella squeezed her eyes shut tight.  
She fell asleep dreaming of

**FIRE-BREATHING DRAGONS,**  
**SLUGS**  
and grizzly bears.







In the morning, Bella  
was exhausted.



She couldn't juggle.



Even the ice cream didn't cheer her up.





And at bedtime there  
was still  
no sign  
of Arthur.

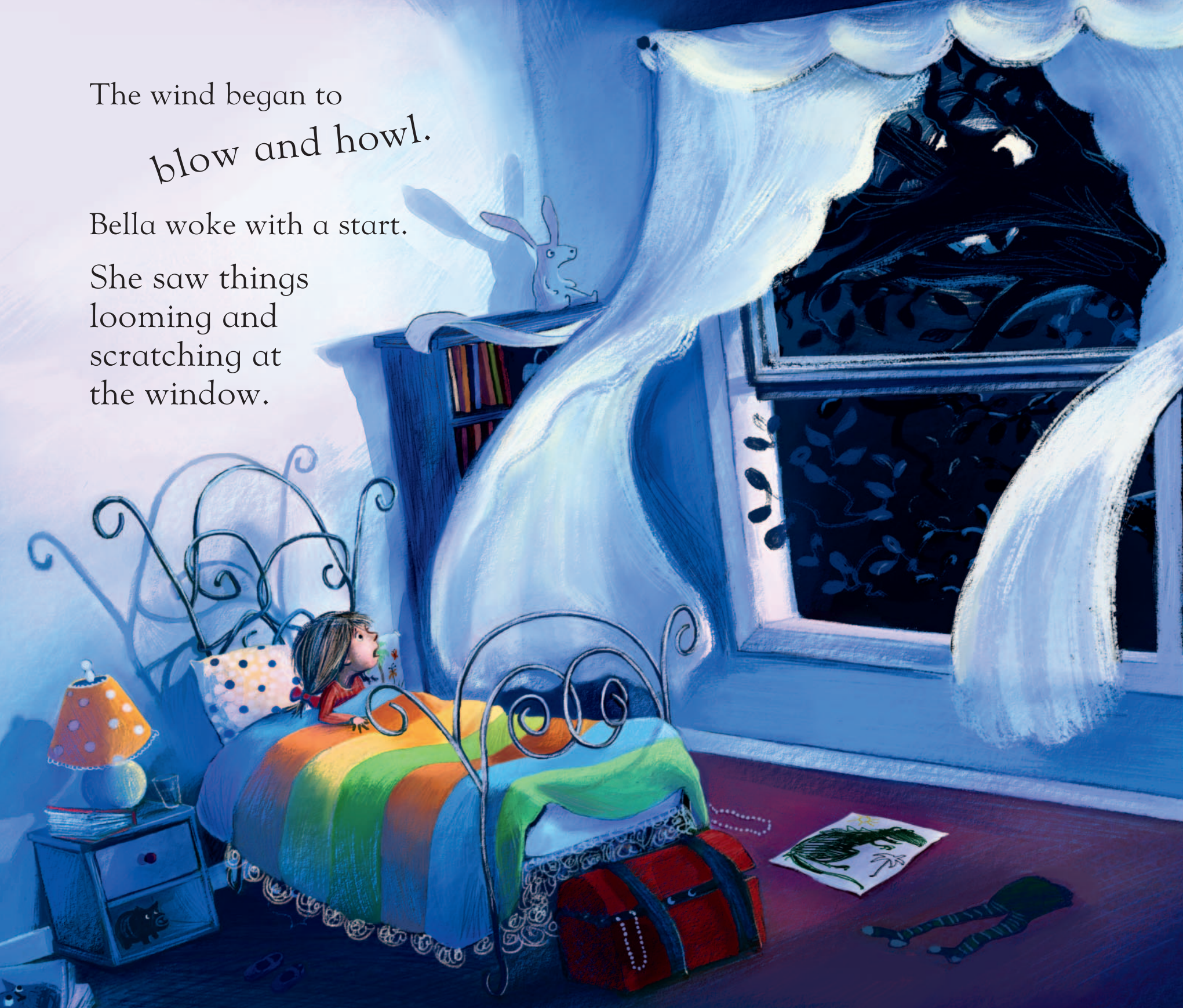




The wind began to  
blow and howl.

Bella woke with a start.

She saw things  
looming and  
scratching at  
the window.





Bella leapt out of bed and ran as fast  
as she could across the hallway  
into her brother's room.



Finley was sound asleep.  
Bella began climbing  
into his crib.

Peeking from under the blanket,  
she  
saw the tip of a soft, furry nose.





# It was Arthur!

Bella was **so** happy to see him . . .



. . . but she was  
very angry with her  
brother for taking him.

She grabbed Arthur and started back to her room.



Left all alone, Finley was afraid.

“Monsters!” he cried.

Bella pretended not to listen.

“Serves him right,” she thought  
as she reached the door.





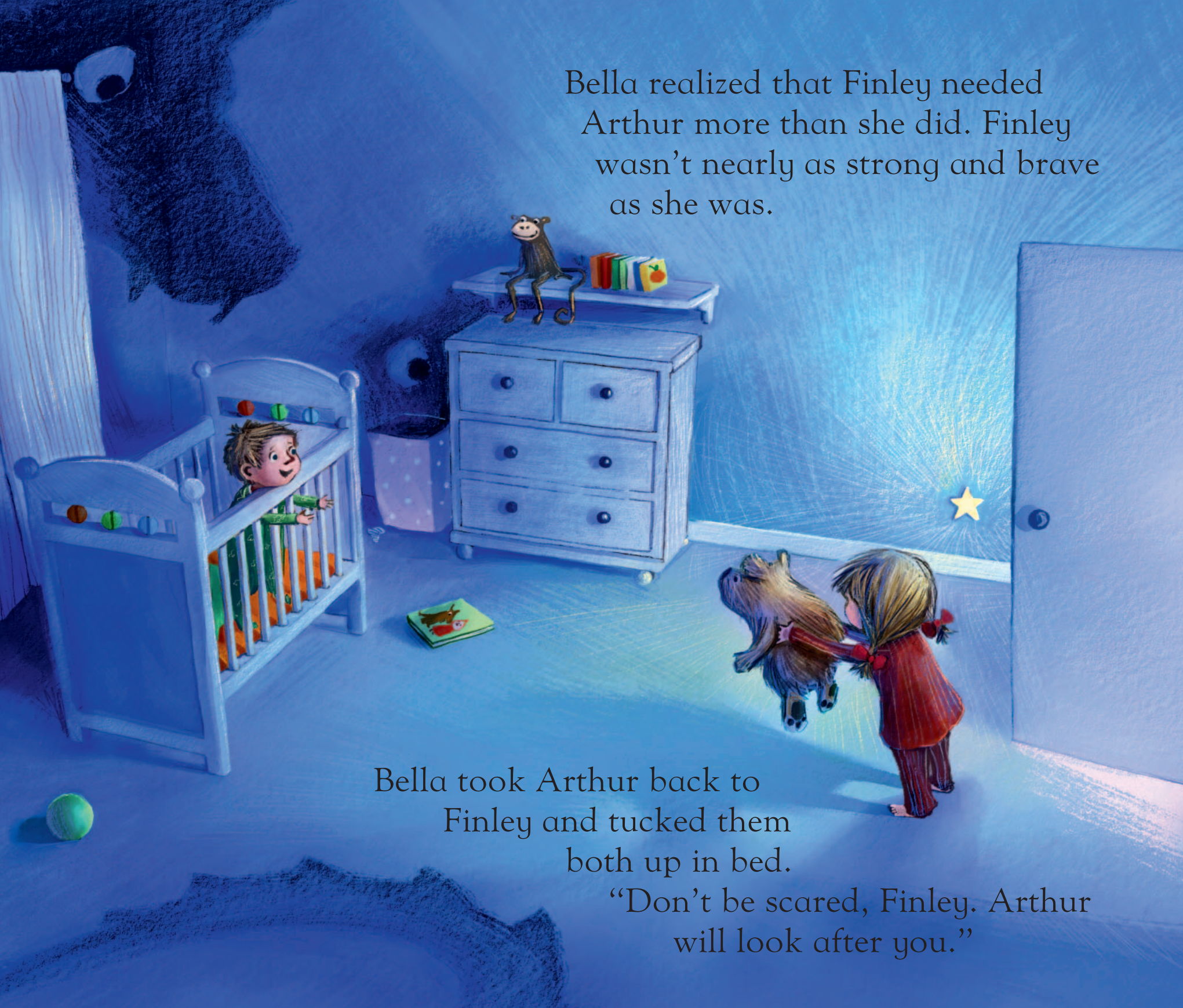


Bella looked back at her brother.  
She saw Finley's eyes, wide and full of tears,  
and her anger melted away.





Bella realized that Finley needed Arthur more than she did. Finley wasn't nearly as strong and brave as she was.



Bella took Arthur back to Finley and tucked them both up in bed.

“Don’t be scared, Finley. Arthur will look after you.”



Bella felt braver and  
braver with each  
step she took back  
to her room.



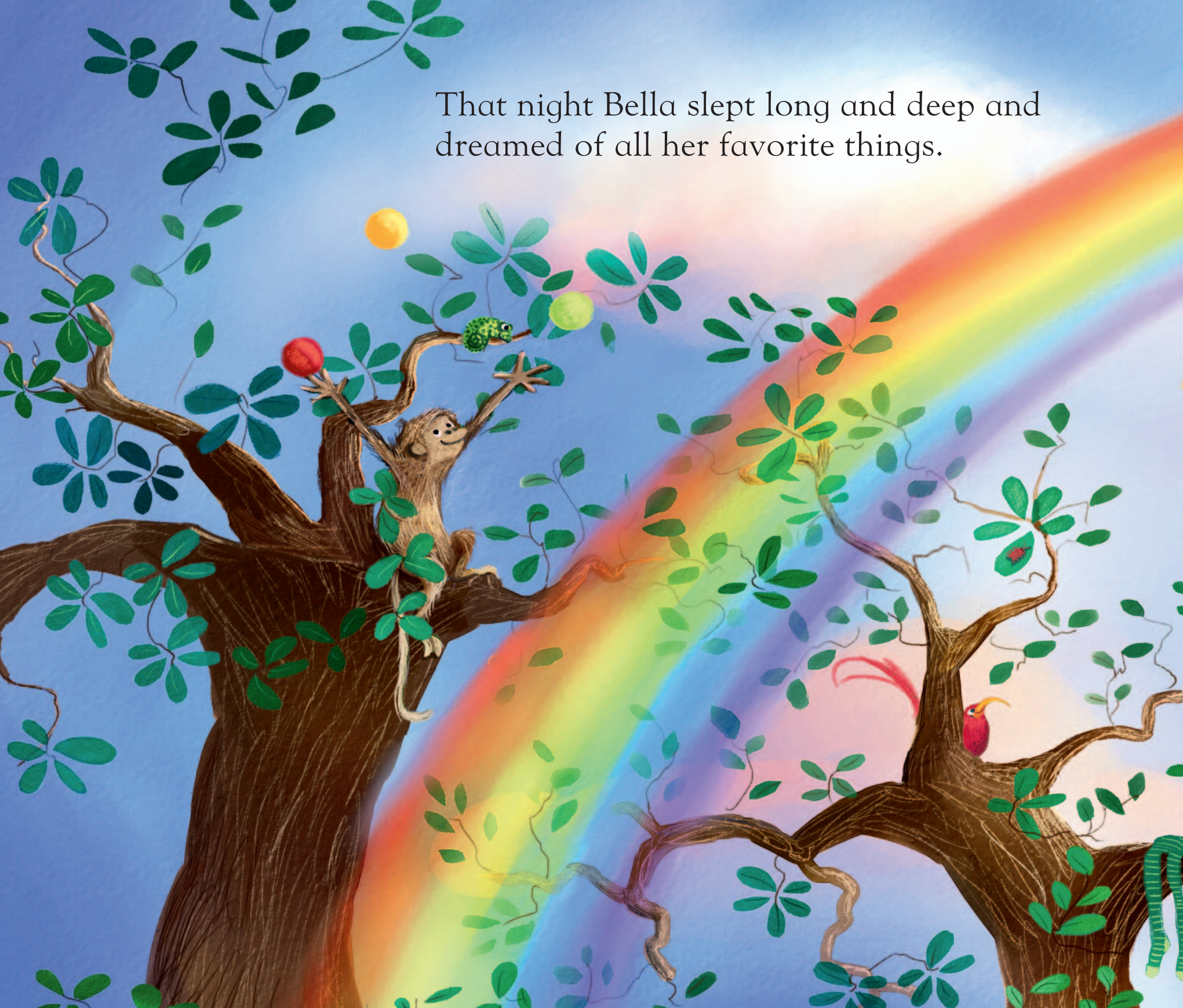


When at last she  
climbed into bed, Bella  
felt as brave as a knight.  
All the monsters shook  
with fear and fizzled into  
nothing.



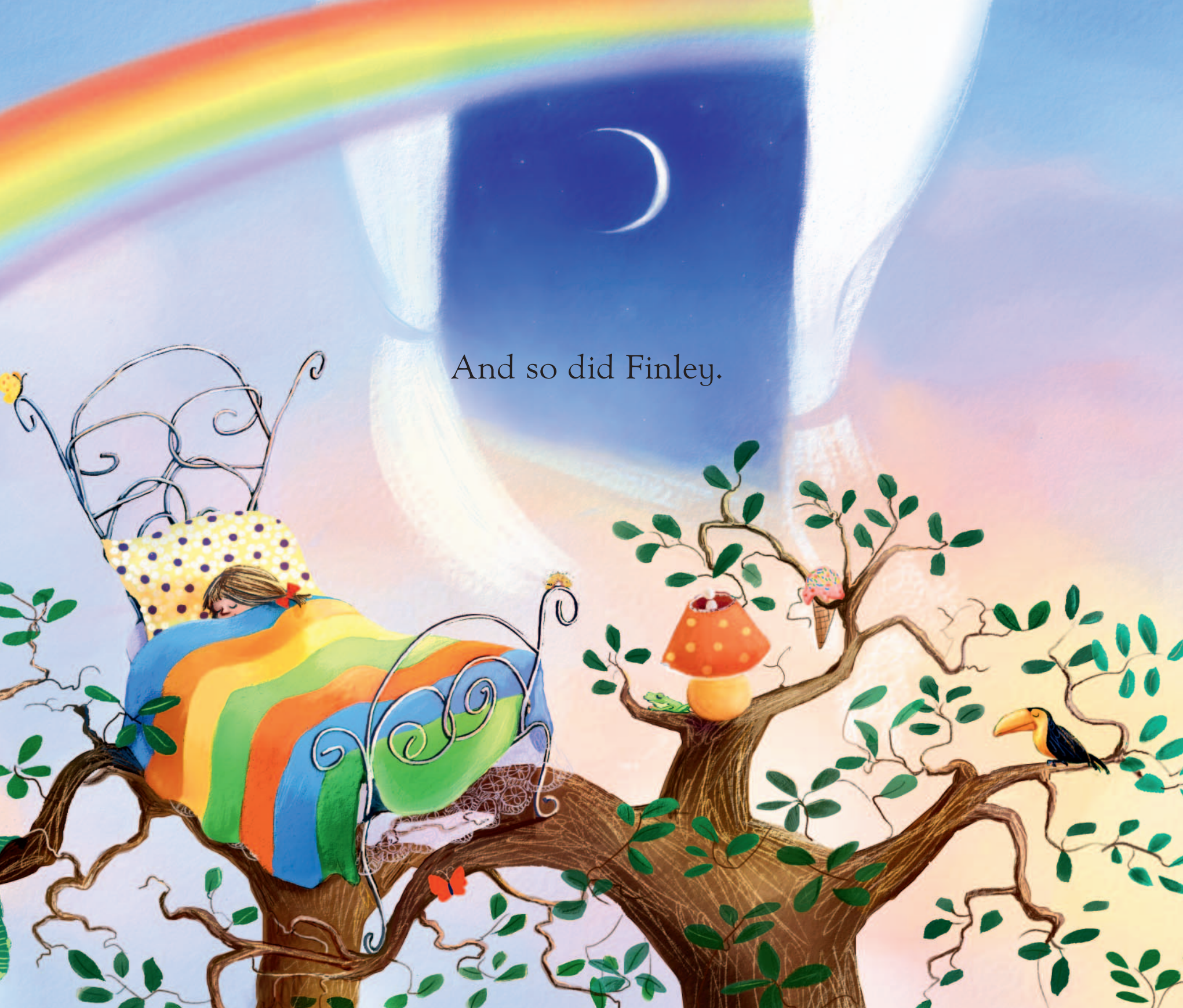


That night Bella slept long and deep and  
dreamed of all her favorite things.





And so did Finley.













*Jessica Meserve* was born in Maine and grew up in New Hampshire. She studied illustration at the Edinburgh College of Art in Scotland. Before pursuing a career as an illustrator, she worked in children's publishing. She now lives with her partner and daughter.

Jessica is the author and illustrator of *Small Sister* and *Can Anybody Hear Me?*, and she illustrates the Daisy Dawson books by Steve Voake.

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